

## OVERVIEW

**AGENCY:** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

**TITLE:** Chesapeake Bay Program Office Fiscal Year 2013 Request for Proposals for the Annual Chesapeake Bay Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Aerial Survey

**ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE:** Initial Announcement

**RFP NUMBER:** EPA-R3-CBP-13-01

**CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NUMBER:** 66.466

### IMPORTANT DATES

January 25, 2013	Issuance of RFP
March 11, 2013	Proposal Submission Deadline (see Section IV for more information)
March 25, 2013	Approximate date for EPA to notify applicants of results
April 15, 2013	Approximate date for applicant to submit federal cooperative agreement application
June 14, 2013	Approximate date of award

EPA will consider all proposals that are postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service, hand-delivered, sent through an official delivery service (with documentation indicating EPA acceptance from said delivery service), or submitted via Grants.gov on or before 5:00 EST on March 11, 2013. Any proposals postmarked, hand delivered, or submitted via <http://www.grants.gov/> after the due date and time will not be considered for funding. No proposals will be accepted by facsimile or e-mail.

### SUMMARY

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Chesapeake Bay Program Office (CBPO) is announcing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for applicants to provide the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) partners with a proposal addressing an annual aerial survey, image-interpretation, mapping and web-based access to maps denoting the distribution and abundance of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) throughout the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries. CBP partners include federal agencies, seven watershed jurisdictions, and many non-federal organizations; however, work funded under this RFP will support the seven watershed jurisdictions and other non-federal partners.

**FUNDING/AWARDS:** This RFP will cover the project period up to and including six years from an expected start date of June 14, 2013. CBPO plans to award one cooperative agreement under this RFP. The total estimated funding for six years is approximately \$1,200,000 to

\$1,800,000, with an estimated \$200,000 to \$300,000 available for the first year and each additional year. There is no guarantee of funding throughout this period or beyond.

## **FULL TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT**

### **I. Funding Opportunity Description**

### **II. Award Information**

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### **IV. Proposal and Submission Information**

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## **I: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION**

### **A. Background**

#### **1. About the Chesapeake Bay Program**

The Chesapeake Bay is North America's largest and most biologically diverse estuary. A resource of extraordinary productivity, it is worthy of the highest levels of protection and restoration. Authorized by Section 117 of the Clean Water Act, the CBP is responsible for supporting the Chesapeake Executive Council through a number of actions, including the coordination of federal, state, and local efforts to restore and protect living resources and water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. Section 117 also authorizes EPA to provide assistance grants to support the goals of the Program.

The CBP is a unique regional partnership that has led and directed the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay since 1983. The CBP partners include the states of Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia; the District of Columbia; the Chesapeake Bay Commission, a tri-state legislative body; the U.S. EPA, representing the federal government; and participating citizen, local government, and scientific and technical advisory groups.

The CBP Partnership is guided at the direction of the Chesapeake Executive Council (Executive Council), which, through its leadership, establishes the policy direction for the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay and exerts its leadership to rally public support for the Bay effort and signs directives, agreements, and amendments that set goals and guide policy for Chesapeake Bay restoration.

The Principals' Staff Committee (PSC) acts as the senior policy advisors to the Executive Council, accepting items for their consideration and approval and setting agendas for Executive Council meetings. The PSC also provides policy and program direction to the Management Board.

The Management Board provides strategic planning, priority setting, and operational guidance through implementation of a comprehensive, coordinated, accountable implementation strategy for the CBP. It directs and coordinates all of the goal teams and workgroups under it.

The Goal Implementation Teams (GITs) includes federal and non-federal experts from throughout the watershed. Thus, academic experts, advocacy organizations, and others become active members of the broad restoration partnership.

Pursuant to Section 117(b)(2) of the Clean Water Act, 42 USC 1267 (b), CBPO is the office within EPA charged with providing support to the Council in the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. The CBPO and the CBP mentioned above are two distinct entities.

## **2. Chesapeake 2000 and Executive Order 13508**

On June 28, 2000, the CBP's governing Council signed an agreement, known as *Chesapeake 2000: A Watershed Partnership (Chesapeake 2000)*. *Chesapeake 2000* is one of the most comprehensive watershed restoration plans developed for the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The agreement consolidated prior commitments and established new goals and deadlines for protecting and restoring the Chesapeake Bay's living resources, water quality, and vital habitats, promoting sound land use and engaging communities. In addition to identifying key measures necessary to restore the Chesapeake Bay, *Chesapeake 2000* provided the opportunity for Delaware, New York, and West Virginia to become more involved in the CBP partnership. These headwater states now work within the CBP Partnership to reduce nutrients and sediment that flow from their jurisdictional rivers into the Chesapeake Bay. This cooperative agreement will help fulfill the commitments of the *Chesapeake 2000*, Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. The outcomes will result in progress toward water quality and living resource goals on an annual basis.

President Obama's Executive Order (EO) 13508 to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay was issued in May 2009. The EO calls for a new strategy for restoring and protecting the Chesapeake Bay. This new strategy builds upon existing CBP goals and identifies a small set of strategy goals and outcome measures that are representative of the "new era of shared federal leadership" in protecting and restoring the Bay, as called for in the EO.

## **B. Scope of Work**

This RFP is seeking cost-effective proposals from eligible applicants for conducting an annual aerial survey, image-interpretation, mapping, and providing web-based access to maps denoting the distribution and abundance of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) throughout the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries in support of the non-federal organizations that are members of the CBP Partnership. While the CBP Partnership is comprised of federal and non-federal organizations, any activities funded under this RFP shall only directly support the non-federal partners. The non-federal partners of the CBP will provide programmatic direction to the

cooperative agreement recipient through the CBP Partnership's Vital Habitats Goal Implementation Team.

The EPA CBPO plans to award one cooperative agreement under this RFP. The estimated funding for six years is approximately \$1,200,000 to \$1,800,000, with an estimated \$200,000 to \$300,000 available for the first year and each additional year.

If your organization has an interest in this project, has the skills to accomplish the activities, and is eligible to receive a federal assistance agreement as described in Section III of this announcement, we encourage you to submit a proposal. Each eligible proposal will be evaluated using the criteria described in Section V. The activity is a multi-year project (up to six years), and the proposal should have a work plan and budget for the first year and an estimated budget detail for each of the subsequent years.

**Activity: Chesapeake Bay Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Aerial Survey**

**Estimated Funding: \$200,000- \$300,000**

Submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) is a critical living resource in the Chesapeake Bay that has undergone rapid and dramatic bay-wide fluctuations in distribution and abundance over the last three decades. Declines have been related to water quality changes, principally nutrient enrichment and sediment inputs to the bay (primarily from non-point sources). SAV is being subjected to ever increasing pressure from recreational, commercial, and industrial demands. Because SAV is dependent on good water quality, which it responds to over short time scales, it can be an important indicator of water quality.

The Chesapeake Bay SAV aerial survey, conducted annually since 1984 (except for 1988), has been crucial in developing a database to help analyze water quality changes in the Chesapeake Bay. Recent data suggest that SAV can and will respond to even small changes in water quality. Rapid and relatively large, inter-annual changes in many regions of the Chesapeake Bay have been recorded since the survey began in 1984. The annual survey must continue if we are to fully understand processes, both anthropogenically and naturally induced, that affect SAV distribution and abundance. It is critical to survey the shallow water habitats of the entire Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries and embayments because both increases and decreases in SAV can occur even within one region.

This activity provides for the annual aerial survey, image-interpretation, mapping and web-based access to maps denoting the distribution and abundance of SAV throughout the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries. The SAV annual survey directly tracks progress toward SAV restoration and protection goals and continues a long-term dataset that tracks habitat responses to management initiatives. Survey results are the CBP Partnership's long-term validation of progress on water clarity and habitat improvements and are a significant public communication product on the status of a critical habitat resource.

EPA intends to award a cooperative agreement to an organization to support the CBP

Partnership's continuing mission of evaluating the effectiveness of management actions taken to reduce nutrient and sediment loads and improve Chesapeake Bay water quality. This mission includes enhancing and maintaining multi-partner environmental monitoring networks across the Bay tidal waters and throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The resultant data are used by the CBP Partnership's jurisdictions to assess achievement of jurisdictions' tidal water quality standards, determine long-term trends, reporting Bay and ecosystem health to the public, and support adaptive management by the jurisdictional partner agencies.

The proposing organization should be oriented towards further promotion and continued enhancement of estuarine monitoring, the production of management-oriented products, and ensuring full web-accessibility of the resultant data within the partnership-oriented, implementation-focused structure of the CBP. The above areas of emphasis need not be the sole missions of the proposing organization.

SAV aerial survey methods, image-interpretation methods, and data management are well-established over the past 30 years and subject to rigorous quality assurance planning and review. For more information on aerial image methods, SAV species, mapping and other information related to these methodologies, please refer to: <http://www.vims.edu/bio/sav/sav11>.

The following are examples of the types of activities the recipient may carry out to support the annual mapping of the distribution and abundance of SAV across the Bay and its tidal tributaries and embayments. Applicants may consider these activities as well as describe alternative approaches to providing for the requested annual SAV distribution and abundance data described above. EPA envisions that the annual survey will continue to be progressively modernized over the course of the next six years through carefully studied methodological changes that take advantage of the best available cost-effective technology while maintaining the continuity and accuracy of the long-term dataset.

#### Capturing of Aerial Imagery

- Aerial imagery will be the principal method used to assess the distribution of SAV in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries.
- Flight lines will be designed to provide full coverage of water areas that are less than two meters in depth at mean low water to ensure complete coverage of SAV beds.
- The flight lines need to also include sufficient land features to serve as ground control points.
- Recipients are asked to follow the CBP Partnership's agreed-upon general guidelines for mission planning and execution, which address tidal stage, plant growth, sun angle, turbidity, wind, atmospheric transparency, and sensor operation to allow for capturing of images under near-optimal conditions to ensure consistency with the 30-year database of SAV distribution and abundance data. These guidelines can be accessed at [http://www.vims.edu/bio/sav/sav11/aerial\\_photography.html](http://www.vims.edu/bio/sav/sav11/aerial_photography.html).
- The guidelines are critical because significant distortion of any one item could significantly decrease the ability to detect the SAV or to interpret the imagery.

- Acquisition of the imagery needs to be timed to coincide with periods of peak biomass of the dominant SAV species in each particular area.

#### Image-interpretation and Mapping SAV Bed Distribution and Abundance

- The aerial images will be evaluated for SAV signatures using all available information, including knowledge of aquatic grass signatures on the images, areas of grass coverage from previous flights, ground information, and aerial visual surveys.
- Images containing SAV signatures should be orthographically corrected.
- The boundaries of all SAV beds visible on the aerial imagery need to be stored on a delineated basis in GIS datasets.
- An estimate of percent cover within each delineated SAV bed is needed.
- The accuracy of the position of SAV beds, bed area, and density classification must be sufficient to support the regional evaluation of SAV in the current year.
- The data must also be of comparable accuracy and precision to permit comparison with data from previous years.

#### Coordination of Ground Surveys

- Data on species distribution is collected annually by a variety of sources, including surveys by citizens, academic institutions, and agencies, to cover as many of the CBP segments as possible.
- Field validation of image-interpretation has been an important component of the Partnership's SAV survey methodology, so the recipient will be responsible for coordinating the reporting, synthesis, and mapping of these various ground surveys.
- Data collected from these surveys will be incorporated into the GIS dataset of SAV bed distribution and abundance.

#### Web Accessibility of Data and Products

- A web-based comprehensive final report that presents the results of the annual SAV distribution and abundance survey program will be made publicly available.
- The SAV distribution, abundance, and species identification GIS dataset will be made publicly available on the Internet.
- Metadata, including identification, data quality, spatial data organization, spatial reference, entity and attribute, and distribution information, will be included as part of the datasets made available on-line.

#### Modernization of Methodologies

- While assuring continuity in the utility of the existing dataset, the recipient will work toward improving the efficiency of the methodology of the SAV survey.
- Recipients will make commitments to incorporate innovative methods that improve efficiency and accuracy over time.

### ***Obtaining Additional Information***

For additional background information on the CBP achievements and commitments, see the CBP Partnership's website located at <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/> or call 1-800-YOUR-BAY to receive information by mail.

## **C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage & Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs**

Pursuant to Section 6a of EPA Order 5700.7, "Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements," EPA must link proposed assistance agreements to the Agency's Strategic Plan. EPA also requires that grant applicants and recipients adequately describe environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements (see EPA Order 5700.7, Environmental Results under Assistance Agreements, <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700.7.pdf>).

### **1. Linkage to EPA's Strategic Plan**

The overall goal of this cooperative agreement is to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem through continued technical support to address water-quality restoration goals and maintain public awareness of Chesapeake Bay restoration. Under EPA's FY2011-2015 Strategic Plan, this goal supports Strategic Goal #2: Protecting America's Waters; Objective 2.2: Protect and Restore Watersheds and Aquatic Ecosystems; specifically, Improve the Health of the Chesapeake Bay Ecosystem. The project funded under this announcement must be linkable to these strategic goals. Specifically, the proposed activities will support assessment of the achievement of the jurisdictions' tidal water quality standards, determine long-term trends, report on Bay and ecosystem health to the public, and improve adaptive management by the jurisdictional partner agencies.

### **2. Outputs**

The term "output" means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal and objective that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period. Expected outputs from the project(s) to be funded under this announcement may include the following:

- Web-based publication of maps of SAV distribution and abundance.
- Web-based access to SAV bed-scale distribution and abundance data, including species information where ground survey data is available.
- Enhancement to the procedures and methods for conducting the annual aerial survey that results in methodological changes that take advantage of the best available, cost-effective technology while maintaining the continuity and accuracy of the long-term dataset.

Progress reports and a final report will also be required outputs, as specified in Section VI(C) of this announcement, “Reporting Requirement.”

### **3. Outcomes**

The term “outcome” means the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be qualitative and environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature but must also be quantitative. They may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period. Examples of outcomes under this proposal are the evaluation of:

- The effectiveness of management actions taken to reduce nutrient and sediment loads to the Bay’s tidal waters.
- Water clarity based on assessment of trends in SAV distribution and abundance within individual Chesapeake Bay segments.
- The effectiveness of resource management decisions to further protect SAV beds – e.g., changes to dredging restrictions and guidelines, fisheries management actions, habitat restoration actions – based on assessment of trends in SAV distribution and abundance within individual Chesapeake Bay segments.

### **D. Authorizing Statutes and Regulations**

The cooperative agreement made as a result of this announcement is authorized under the Clean Water Act, Section 117(d). Under Section 117(d) (1) of the Clean Water Act, EPA has the authority to issue grants and cooperative agreements for the purposes of protecting and restoring the Chesapeake Bay's ecosystem. This project is subject to EPA’s General Grant Regulations: 40 CFR Part 30 for Grants and Cooperative Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Nonprofit Organizations and 40 CFR Part 31 Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments.

## **II: AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. Funding Amount and Expected Number of Awards**

CBPO plans to award one cooperative agreement under this RFP. Funding for the activity listed above is approximately \$200,000 to \$300,000 annually for FY2013 through FY2018, depending on funding availability, satisfactory performance, and other applicable considerations. The total estimated funding for six years is approximately \$1,200,000 to \$1,800,000.

EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no award under this announcement.

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with Agency policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available after the original selection



is made. Any additional selection for awards will be made no later than six months after the original selection decision.

## **B. Award Type**

EPA has determined that a cooperative agreement is the appropriate funding vehicle for this project. Cooperative agreements are used under circumstances where substantial involvement is anticipated between EPA and the recipient during performance of the activity. EPA awards cooperative agreements for those projects in which it expects to have substantial interaction with the recipient throughout the performance of the project. EPA will negotiate the precise terms and conditions of “substantial involvement” as part of the award process. Federal involvement may include close monitoring of the recipient’s performance; collaboration during the performance of the scope of work; in accordance with 40 CFR 30.44(e) or 31.36(g), as appropriate, review of proposed procurements; reviewing qualifications of key personnel; and/or review and comment on the content of printed or electronic publications prepared. EPA does not have the authority to select employees or contractors employed by the recipient. The final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient.

For this project, federal involvement would typically be in the form of participation with other CBP partners and stakeholders in an advisory capacity to the grantee. This participation is expected to include involvement through the various CBP Goal Implementation Teams and related committees and workgroups (on which EPA also participates to ensure that all the recommendations for technical work support the CBP partners). All work conducted is to support the efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem.

## **C. Partial Funding**

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals by funding discrete portions or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a project, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice the applicant or affect the basis upon which the proposal or portion thereof was evaluated and selected for award and therefore maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

## **D. Expected Project Period**

The expected project period for the cooperative agreement is six years, with funding provided on an annual basis. No commitment of funding can be made beyond the first year. The expected start date for the award resulting from this RFP is **June 14, 2013**.

## **E. Pre-Award Costs**

Recipients may incur otherwise eligible and allowable pre-award costs up to 90 days prior to award at their own risk without prior approval of EPA’s award official. Pre-award costs must

comply with 40 C.F.R. 30.25(i) for universities and non-profits and 2 CFR Part 225, Appendix B, Item 31 for governmental organizations. If EPA determines that the requested pre-award costs comply with the relevant OMB Circular (A-87 for public entities and A-122 for nonprofit organizations), and that the costs are justified as allocable to the project, then these costs may be included as allowable expenditures at the time that the assistance award document is prepared. However, if for any reason EPA does not fund the proposal or the amount of the award is less than the applicant anticipated, then EPA is under no obligation to reimburse the applicant for these costs. Thus, applicants incur pre-award costs at their own risk. Costs incurred more than 90 days prior to award require the approval of EPA Region 3's grant official.

### **III: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

#### **A. Eligible Applicants**

Nonprofit organizations, state and local governments, colleges, universities, and interstate agencies are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP. For-profit organizations are not eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP.

#### **B. Cost-Share or Matching Requirements**

Pursuant to Clean Water Act 117(d)(2)(A), the agency shall determine the cost share requirements for awards. The CFDA Number 66.466 states that assistance agreement applicants must commit to a cost share ranging from 5 percent to 50 percent of eligible project costs as determined at the sole discretion of EPA. For this RFP, EPA has determined that an applicant must provide a minimum of five percent of the total cost of the project as the non-federal cost share.

Cost share may be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions. Involvement from foundations, watershed groups, private sector, eligible governmental, as well as non-conventional partners can help with the match. This match must be met by eligible and allowable costs and is subject to the match provisions in grant regulations. Proposals that do not demonstrate how the five percent match will be met will be rejected.

#### **C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria**

Only proposals from eligible entities (see Section III.A above) that meet the following threshold eligibility criteria will be evaluated against the criteria in Section V.B. Applicants must meet the following threshold criteria to be considered for funding. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified in writing within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected.

Where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the narrative proposal, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.

2. In addition, proposals must be postmarked, hand-delivered, sent through an official delivery service (with documentation indicating EPA acceptance from said delivery service), or submitted through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) as specified in Section IV of this announcement on or before the proposal submission deadline published in Section IV. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their proposal reaches the designated person/office specified in Section IV by the submission deadline. Proposals sent after the submission deadline will be considered late and returned to the sender without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical problems associated with [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Applicants should confirm receipt of their proposal with Tim Roberts at 410-267-5770 or [roberts.timothy-p@epa.gov](mailto:roberts.timothy-p@epa.gov) as soon as possible after the submission. Failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.
3. The project funded under this announcement must be linked to the strategic goal outlined in Section I.C.1.
4. For a proposal to be considered eligible for funding, substantive project-related work included in the proposal must take place within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which includes portions of Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia, and all of the District of Columbia.
5. Proposals must comply with the eligibility of Section III. A. and specify how they will meet the five percent cost-share requirement of Section III.B.
6. Proposals requesting funding for more than the maximum of the cumulative funding range for the activity will be rejected.
7. If a proposal is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities, that portion of the proposal will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the proposal, render the entire proposal ineligible for funding.

## **IV: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **A. How to Obtain a Proposal Package**

Applicants can download individual grant application forms from EPA's Office of Grants and Debarment website at: <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm>.

To obtain a hard copy of materials, please send an email or written request to the Agency contact listed in Section VII of this announcement. Do not submit a full federal grant application in

response to this RFP. If your proposal is selected for funding, an EPA project officer will request an application from you, negotiate the work plan and budget, and oversee the process of awarding the cooperative agreement.

## **B. Content and Form of Proposal Submission**

Each proposal will be evaluated using the criteria referenced in Section V.B. of this announcement. You must submit a single-spaced proposal of up to 12 pages in length by the date and time specified in Section IV.C below. The format for this proposal is contained in Appendix A of this announcement. Review the directions for the preparation of the proposal. Proposals that are not prepared in substantial compliance with the requirements in Appendix A will not be considered for funding and will be returned to the applicant.

The proposal package **must** include all of the following materials:

- 1. Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance** – Complete the form. There are no attachments. Please be sure to include organization fax number and email address in Block 8 of SF-424. Please note that the organizational Dunn and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or visiting their website at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>.
- 2. SF-424A, Budget Information** – Complete the form. There are no attachments. The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated on line 22.
- 3. Narrative Proposal** – The format for this proposal is contained in Appendix A of this announcement. Review the directions for the preparation of the proposal.

### **Requirements for Narrative Proposal – See Appendix A**

All proposal review criteria in Section V must be addressed in the proposal. The proposal shall not exceed 12 pages in length. Pages refer to one side of a single-spaced, typed page. Font size should be no smaller than 10 and the proposal must be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" paper. Note that the 12 pages include all supporting materials, including resumes or curriculum vitae and letters of support. With the exception of documentation of non-profit status, cost-share letters of commitment, and the SF-424, if you submit more than 12 pages, the additional pages will be discarded and will not be reviewed. See Appendix A for additional instructions.

### **C. Submission Dates and Times**

EPA will consider all submissions that are postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service, hand-delivered, include official delivery service documentation indicating EPA receipt from a delivery service, or submitted via <http://www.grants.gov/> on or before 5:00 p.m. EST on **March 11, 2013**. All submissions postmarked, hand delivered, or submitted via <http://www.grants.gov/> after the deadlines specified above will not be considered for funding. No proposals will be accepted by facsimile or e-mail.

### **D. Confidential Business Information**

EPA recommends that you do not include confidential business information (“CBI”) in your proposal/application. However, if CBI is included, it will be treated in accordance with 40 CFR 2.203. Applicants must clearly indicate which portion(s) of their proposal/application they are claiming as CBI. EPA will evaluate such claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure. The Agency protects competitive proposals/applications from disclosure under applicable provisions of the Freedom of Information Act prior to the completion of the competitive selection process.

### **E. Pre-proposal/Application Assistance and Communications**

In accordance with EPA’s Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications/proposals. However, consistent with the provisions in the announcement, EPA will respond to questions in writing from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposals, and requests for clarification about the announcement. Applicants should email their questions to Tim Roberts at [roberts.timothy-p@epa.gov](mailto:roberts.timothy-p@epa.gov). All questions and answers will be posted at <http://www.epa.gov/region3/chesapeake/grants.htm>.

### **F. Intergovernmental Review**

Applicants must comply with the Intergovernmental Review Process and/or consultation provisions of Section 204, Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act, if applicable, which are contained in 40 CFR Part 29. This program is eligible for coverage under Executive Order (EO) 12372, An Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. An applicant should consult the office or official designated as the single point of contact in his or her state for more information on that state's required process for applying for assistance if the state has selected the program for review. Single Points of Contact can be found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>. Further information regarding this requirement will be provided if your proposal is selected for funding.

## **G. Funding Restrictions**

### **Administrative Cost Cap Requirement Under Statutory Authority**

Grantees applying for CBP assistance agreements must adhere to the requirements for “Administrative Costs” under the Clean Water Act, Section 117 (d)(4), which states that administrative costs shall not exceed 10 percent of the annual grant award (annual grant award = federal share plus cost share). **Appendix B: Administrative Cost Cap Worksheet** is provided as an example of a method to calculate the 10-percent limitation. You are not required to submit Appendix B with your proposal.

### **Allowable Costs**

EPA assistance agreement funds may only be used for the purposes set forth in the cooperative agreement and must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Federal funds may not be used for cost sharing for other federal grants (except where authorized by statute), lobbying, or intervention in federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. In addition, federal funds may not be used to sue the federal government or any other government entity. All costs identified in the budget must conform to applicable Federal Cost Principles contained in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-87 "Cost Principles for State, Local and Tribal Governments;" A-122 "Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations;" or A-21 "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions." During the grant negotiation, any ineligible costs outlined in the proposal (i.e. lobbying activities) will be excluded in the final grant award.

### **Management Fees**

When formulating budgets for proposals, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and indirect costs at the rate approved by the applicant’s cognizant audit agency or at the rate provided by the terms of the agreement negotiated with EPA. The term "management fees or similar charges" refers to expenses added to the direct costs in order to accumulate and reserve funds for ongoing business expenses, unforeseen liabilities, or for other similar costs that are not allowable under EPA assistance agreements. Management fees or similar charges may not be used to improve or expand the project funded under this agreement, except to the extent authorized as a direct cost of carrying out the scope of work.

### **Programmatic Capability and Past Performance**

Applicants must submit a list of federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements as specified in **Appendix A**. In evaluating this evaluation criteria, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). In addition, applicants must provide information on their organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project and their staff expertise/qualifications, staff

knowledge, and resources, or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

### **Partnerships, Contractors, and Subawards**

#### **a. Can funding be used for the applicant to make subawards, acquire contract services, or fund partnerships?**

EPA awards funds to one eligible applicant as the recipient even if other eligible applicants are named as partners or co-applicants or members of a coalition or consortium. The recipient is accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of funds.

Funding may be used to provide subgrants or subawards of financial assistance, which includes using subawards or subgrants to fund partnerships, provided the recipient complies with applicable requirements for subawards or subgrants, including those contained in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31 as appropriate. Applicants must compete contracts for services and products, including consultant contracts, and conduct cost and price analyses to the extent required by the procurement provisions of these regulations. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Applicants are not required to identify subawardees/subgrantees and/or contractors or consultants in their proposal. If they nonetheless do so, that does not relieve the applicant of its obligations to comply with subawards/subgrant and/or competitive procurement requirements as appropriate. Please note that applicants may not award sole-source contracts to consulting, engineering, or other firms assisting applicants with the proposal based solely on the firm's role in preparing the proposal.

Successful applicants cannot use subgrants or subawards to avoid requirements in EPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services or products from for-profit organizations to carry out its assistance agreement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the subawardee or subgrantee must be consistent with the standards for distinguishing between vendor transactions and subrecipient assistance under Subpart B Section 210 of OMB Circular A-133, and the definitions of subaward at 40 CFR Subsection 30.2(ff) or subgrant at 40 CFR Section 31.3 as applicable. EPA will not be a party to these transactions. Applicants acquiring commercial goods or services must comply with the competitive procurement standards in 40 CFR Section 30.40 or 40 CFR Section 31.36 and cannot use a subaward/subgrant as the funding mechanism.

#### **b. How will an applicant's proposed subawardees/subgrantees and contractors be considered during the evaluation process described in Section V of the announcement?**

Section V of the announcement describes the evaluation criteria and evaluation process that will be used by EPA to make selections under this announcement. During this evaluation, except for those criteria that relate to the applicant's own qualifications, past performance, and reporting

history, the review panel will consider, as appropriate and relevant, the qualifications, expertise, and experience of:

- (i) An applicant's named subawardees/subgrantees identified in the proposal if the applicant demonstrates in the proposal that the subaward/subgrant will be properly awarded consistent with the applicable regulations in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31. For example, applicants must not use subawards/subgrants to obtain commercial services or products from for profits or individual consultants;
- (ii) An applicant's named contractor(s), including consultants, identified in the proposal if the applicant demonstrates in its proposal that the contractor(s) was selected in compliance with the competitive Procurement Standards in 40 CFR Section 30.40 or 40 CFR Section 31.36 as appropriate. For example, an applicant must demonstrate that it selected the contractor(s) competitively or that a proper non-competitive sole-source award consistent with the regulations will be made to the contractor(s); that efforts were made to provide small and disadvantaged businesses with opportunities to compete; and that some form of cost or price analysis was conducted. EPA may not accept sole-source justifications for contracts for services or products that are otherwise readily available in the commercial marketplace.

EPA will not consider the qualifications, experience, and expertise of named subawardees/subgrantees and/or named contractor(s) during the proposal/application evaluation process unless the applicant complies with these requirements.

## **H. Submission Methods and Instructions**

You may submit proposal in one of two ways: If you wish to apply electronically via <http://www.grants.gov/>, please follow the appropriate instructions under "Grants.gov Electronic Submission Instructions" below. If you wish to apply with a hard copy submission, please follow the instructions under "Hard Copy Submission Instructions" below. EPA encourages applicants to submit their proposal materials electronically through <http://www.grants.gov>. Please only use one form of submission.

### **Grants.gov Electronic Submission Instructions**

The electronic submission of your proposal must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on "Get Registered" on the left side of the page. *Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete.* If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.



To begin the proposal process under this grant announcement, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Apply for Grants” tab on the left side of the page. Then click on “Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package” to download the compatible Adobe viewer and obtain the application package. **To apply through Grants.gov you must use Adobe Reader applications and download the compatible Adobe Reader version (Adobe Reader applications are available to download for free on the Grants.gov website. For more information on Adobe Reader please visit the Help section on grants.gov at <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp> or [http://www.grants.gov/aboutgrants/program\\_status.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/aboutgrants/program_status.jsp)).**

Once you have downloaded the viewer, you may retrieve the application package by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-R3-CBP-13-01, or the CFDA number that applies to the announcement (CFDA 66.466), in the appropriate field. You may also be able to access the proposal/application package by clicking on the Application button at the top right of the synopsis page for this announcement on <http://www.grants.gov>. (To find the synopsis page, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Find Grant Opportunities” on the left side of the page and then go to Search Opportunities and use the Browse by Agency feature to find EPA opportunities).

To view the full funding announcement, go to <http://www.epa.gov/region03/chesapeake/grants.htm> or go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Find Grant Opportunities” on the left side of the page and then click on Search Opportunities/Browse by Agency and select Environmental Protection Agency.

### **Proposal Submission Deadline**

Your organization’s AOR must submit your complete proposal electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) no later than 5 p.m. EST on **March 11, 2013**.

### **Application Preparation and Submission Instructions**

Please submit *all* of the proposal materials described in Section IV.B above (SF-424, SF-424A, and Narrative Proposal). Documents 1 through 3 listed under Section IV.B above should appear in the “Mandatory Documents” box on the Grants.gov Grant Application Package page.

For documents 1 and 2, click on the appropriate form and then click “Open Form” below the box. The fields that must be completed will be highlighted in yellow. Optional fields and completed fields will be displayed in white. If you enter an invalid response or incomplete information in a field, you will receive an error message. When you have finished filling out each form, click “Save.” When you return to the electronic Grant Application Package page, click on the form you just completed, and then click on the box that says, “Move Form to Submission List.” This action will move the document over to the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

For document 3, you will need to attach electronic files. Prepare your narrative proposal as described in Section IV.B. and Appendix A of the announcement and save the document to your

computer as an MS Word or PDF file. When you are ready to attach your proposal to the application package, click on “Project Narrative Attachment Form,” and open the form. Click “Add Mandatory Project Narrative File,” and then attach your proposal (previously saved to your computer) using the browse window that appears. You may then click “View Mandatory Project Narrative File” to view it. Enter a brief descriptive title of your project in the space beside “Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename;” the filename should be no more than 40 characters long. If there other attachments that you would like to submit to accompany your proposal, you may click “Add Optional Project Narrative File” and proceed as before. When you have finished attaching the necessary documents, click “Close Form.” When you return to the “Grant Application Package” page, select the “Project Narrative Attachment Form” and click “Move Form to Submission List.” The form should now appear in the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

Please note that applicants are limited to using the following characters in all attachment file names. Valid file names may only include the following UTF-8 characters: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, underscore ( \_ ), hyphen (-), space, period. If applicants use any other characters when naming their attachment files their applications will be rejected by grants.gov.

Once you have finished filling out all of the forms/attachments and they appear in one of the “Completed Documents for Submission” boxes, click the “Save” button that appears at the top of the Web page. It is suggested that you save the document a second time, using a different name, since this will make it easier to submit an amended package later if necessary. Please use the following format when saving your file: “Applicant Name – FY13 – SAV Aerial Survey– 1st Submission” or “Applicant Name – FY13 – SAV Aerial Survey– Back-up Submission.” If it becomes necessary to submit an amended package at a later date, then the name of the 2nd submission should be changed to “Applicant Name – FY13 – SAV Aerial Survey– 2nd Submission.”

Once your proposal/application package has been completed and saved, send it to your AOR for submission to EPA through Grants.gov. Please advise your AOR to close all other software programs before attempting to submit the application package through Grants.gov. In the “Application Filing Name” box, your AOR should enter your organization’s name (abbreviate where possible), the fiscal year (e.g., FY13), and the grant category (e.g., Assoc Prog Supp). The filing name should not exceed 40 characters. From the “Grant Application Package” page, your AOR may submit the application package by clicking the “Submit” button that appears at the top of the page. The AOR will then be asked to verify the agency and funding opportunity number for which the application package is being submitted. If problems are encountered during the submission process, the AOR should reboot his/her computer before trying to submit the application package again. [It may be necessary to turn off the computer (not just restart it) before attempting to submit the package again.] If the AOR continues to experience submission problems, he/she may contact Grants.gov for assistance by phone at 800-518-4726 or email at <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp> or contact the person listed in Section VII of this announcement.

Proposal packages submitted through Grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically.

If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (*not from Grants.gov*) within 30 days of the proposal/application deadline, please contact the person listed in Section VII of this announcement. Failure to do so may result in your proposal/application not being reviewed.

### Hard Copy Submission Instructions

Please submit three complete, unbound copies of the proposal package that is described in Section IV.B (SF-424, SF-424A, and Narrative Proposal). The hard copies of the proposal should be double-sided, if possible. The proposal must be mailed or delivered to:

Tim Roberts  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Chesapeake Bay Program Office  
410 Severn Ave., Suite 109  
Annapolis, MD 21403  
(EPA-R3-CBP-13-01)

## V: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

### A. Evaluation Process

After EPA reviews proposals for threshold eligibility purposes as described in Section III, CBPO will conduct a merit evaluation of each eligible proposal. Reviews will be performed by a team of professionals from EPA and other CBP partner organizations with a working knowledge of the technical analysis and programmatic evaluation needs of CBP partnership. All reviewers will sign a conflict of interest statement indicating they have no conflict of interest.

### B. Evaluation Criteria: Maximum score: 255 points

Criteria	Points
<b>1. Organizational Capability and Program Description:</b> Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the application based on:  a. The quality of the proposal and how it demonstrates the ability to timely and successfully achieve the relevant activity to support the CBP partners described in Section I.B ( <b>25 points</b> ).  b. How well the proposal demonstrates that the applicant has the skill, experience, and resources in carrying out technically and logically complex environmental monitoring and sharing the generated data and products while	50

<p>working with multiple management agencies, research institutions, non-governmental organizations, and stakeholder collaborative efforts <b>(25 points)</b>.</p>	
<p><b>2. Programmatic Capability and Environmental Results Past Performance:</b> Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the applicant based on their programmatic capability to successfully perform the proposed activity taking into account the applicant's:</p> <p>a. Past performance in successfully completing federally- and non-federally-funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include federal grants and cooperative agreements but not federal contracts) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project within the last three years (no more than five, and preferably EPA agreements). Successful completion of federally-funded assistance agreements also includes your organization's history of meeting reporting requirements and submission of acceptable final technical reports under those agreements <b>(15 points)</b>.</p> <p>b. Extent and quality to which they adequately documented and/or reported on their progress in achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under federal agency assistance agreements performed within the last three years, and if such progress was not being made, whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not <b>(15 points)</b>.</p> <p>c. Skill and experience in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Planning and performing aerial surveys of SAV in estuarine ecosystems following strict guidelines for the acquisition of the aerial imagery, the resultant image-interpretation, bed mapping, assessment of bed density, coordinating concurrent ground surveys conducted by an array of regional and local agencies, institutions, and nongovernmental organizations, and coding of mapped SAV beds for species present based on ground surveys <b>(50 points)</b>.</li> <li>ii. Preparation of electronic maps depicting the distribution and abundance of SAV beds, continual improvement of techniques for development and public delivery of data and products to better meet resource management and water quality restoration objectives, and maintenance and continual updating of a website for ensuring full public access to all generated data and products <b>(25 points)</b>.</li> </ul> <p>Note: In evaluating applicants under Items a. and b. of these criteria, the Agency will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including Agency files and prior/current</p>	<p>105</p>

grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these subfactors; a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points. If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of zero for these subfactors.	
<b>3. Cost-effectiveness:</b> Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the application on the degree to which the proposal is cost-effective, considering the following factors: organizational overhead (indirect costs) and ability to perform the duties within the operational range of budgets provided by the CBP.	20
<b>4. Transferability of Results to Similar Projects and/or Dissemination to the Public:</b> Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the application based on the degree to which the proposal includes an adequate plan to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Gather information and lessons learned from the project(s) <b>(10 points)</b>.</li> <li>b. Transfer the information/data/ results to CBP partners and stakeholders in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in a timely manner <b>(10 points)</b>.</li> <li>c. Document and distribute results to the appropriate audience or summarize information so that CBP can disseminate in a timely manner <b>(10 points)</b>.</li> </ul>	30
<b>5. Modernization of Methods Over Time:</b> Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the application based on the extent the proposal addresses continued refinements to and modernization of methods to be used over the course of the six-year project period to take advantage of the best available, most cost-effective technologies, interpretation, mapping, and reporting that best addresses evolving resource management needs.	30
<b>6. Timely Expenditure of Grant Funds:</b> Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the application based on the approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.	20

### C. Review and Selection Process

Eligible proposals will be evaluated and ranked using the criteria stated in Section V.B. above by a panel of reviewers from EPA and other CBP partner organizations with a working knowledge of the technical analysis and programmatic evaluation needs of the CBP partnership. The review team will then forward the highest-ranked proposals to the director or deputy director of the CBPO for final selection.

## **VI: AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **A. Award Notices and Instructions for Submission of Final Application**

It is expected that applicants will be notified in writing of funding decisions on or around March 25, 2013 either via email or U.S. Postal Service. This notification, which informs the applicant that its proposal has been selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by the EPA Region 3 grants office. Applicants are cautioned that only a grant award official is authorized to bind the government to the expenditure of funds; selection does not guarantee an award will be made. For example, statutory authorization, funding, or other issues discovered during the award process may affect the ability of EPA to make an award to an applicant. The award notice, signed by an EPA grant award official, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic or postal mail.

Notification of selection does not indicate that the applicant can start work on the project. The selected applicant will be asked to submit a full federal assistance agreement application package. A federal project officer provides assistance in the application process and negotiates a work plan, budget, and starting date. Processing for this particular cooperative agreement award is expected to take 60 days.

### **B. Disputes**

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in Volume 70 of the Federal Register, pages 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) that can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/resolution.htm>. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting Tim Roberts by email at [roberts.timothy-p@epa.gov](mailto:roberts.timothy-p@epa.gov) or fax at 410-267-5777.

### **C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

If your proposal is selected, the following information will be helpful in preparing your cooperative agreement application. A listing and description of general EPA regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at: [http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/applicable\\_epa\\_regulations\\_and\\_description.htm](http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/applicable_epa_regulations_and_description.htm).

#### **Federal Requirements**

An applicant whose proposal is selected for federal funding must complete additional forms prior to award (see 40 CFR Sections 30.12 and 31.10). EPA reserves the right to negotiate and/or adjust the final cooperative agreement amount and work plan content prior to award consistent with agency policies.

**Indirect Costs**

If indirect costs are budgeted in the assistance application and the non-profit organization or educational institute does not have a previously established indirect cost rate, it will need to prepare and submit an indirect cost rate proposal and/or cost allocation plan in accordance with the appropriate federal cost principle, OMB Circular A-122, "Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations" or OMB Circular A-21, "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions" within 90 days from the effective date of the award.

If a local government does not have a previously established indirect cost rate, it will need to prepare its indirect cost rate proposal and/or cost allocation plan in accordance with OMB Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments." The local government recipient whose cognizant federal agency has been designated by OMB must develop and submit its indirect cost rate proposal to its cognizant agency within six months after the close of the governmental unit's fiscal year. If the cognizant federal agency has not been identified by OMB, the local government recipient must still develop (and when required, submit) its proposal within that period.

If a state government agency does not have a previously established indirect cost rate, it agrees that it will prepare its indirect cost rate proposal in accordance with OMB Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments." The state government agency must send its proposal to its cognizant federal agency within six months after the close of the governmental unit's fiscal year.

**Incurred Costs**

Funding eligibility ends on the date specified in the award. The time expended and costs incurred in either the development of the proposal or the final assistance application, or in any subsequent discussions or negotiations prior to the award, are neither reimbursable nor recognizable as part of the recipient's cost share.

**Allowable Costs**

EPA project officers and grant specialists have been provided guidance on determining the allowability and reasonableness of certain cost items under assistance agreements. The guidance indicates that the use of EPA grant funds for evening banquets, evening receptions or for light refreshments and meals at meetings, conferences, training workshops, and outreach activities (events) must be justified by the assistance recipient, identified in the budget detail, must be allowable under the OMB Cost Principles, and approved by the EPA Award Official. Further, EPA will not approve the use of grant funds for any portion of an event where alcohol is served, purchased, or otherwise available even if grant funds are not used to purchase the alcohol.

**EPA Requirements for Quality Management Plans and Quality Assurance Plans**

In accordance with 40 CFR Sections 30.54 and 31.45, projects that include the generation or use of environmental data are required to submit a Quality Management Plan (QMP) and Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP).

The QMP must document quality assurance policies and practices that are sufficient to produce data of adequate quality to meet program objectives. The QMP should be prepared in accordance with EPA QA/R-2: EPA Requirements for Quality Management Plans (refer to <http://www.epa.gov/quality/qs-docs/r2-final.pdf>, Chapter 2). The recipient's QMP should be reviewed and updated annually as needed. The QMP must be submitted to the EPA project officer at least 45 days prior to the initiation of data collection or data compilation.

The recipient must develop and implement quality assurance and quality control procedures, specifications and documentation that are sufficient to produce data of adequate quality to meet project objectives. The Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) is the document that provides comprehensive details about the quality assurance/quality control requirements and technical activities that must be implemented to ensure that project objectives are met. The QAPP should be prepared in accordance with EPA QA/R-5: EPA Requirements for Quality Assurance Project Plans. The QAPP must be submitted to the EPA project officer at least 30 days prior to the initiation of data collection or data compilation. Requirements for QAPPs can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/quality/qs-docs/r5-final.pdf>.

### **Deliverables**

Awarded applicant will be required to provide a chart or list of deliverables, providing items and due dates.

### **B. Pre-Award Administrative Capability Review for Non-Profit Organizations**

Non-profit applicants recommended for funding under this announcement are subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with Section 8b, 8c, and 9d of EPA Order 5700.8 – Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards ([http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700\\_8.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700_8.pdf)). In addition, non-profit applicants that qualify for funding may, depending on the size of the award, be required to fill out and submit the Administrative Capabilities Form with supporting documents contained in Appendix A of EPA Order 5700.8.

Section 7(c) of Order 5700.8 defines non-profit organizations as any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization that: (1) is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest; (2) is not organized primarily for profit; (3) uses its net proceeds to maintain, improve, and/or expand its operations; and (4) is subject to 40 CFR Part 30. The term does not include colleges and universities as defined under 2 CFR Part 220; state, local or federally-recognized Indian Tribal governments; hospitals; or organizations considered as similar to concerns under Attachment C to 2 CFR Part 230.



### **C. Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting**

Applicants must ensure that they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the sub-award and executive total compensation reporting requirements established under OMB guidance at 2 CFR Part 170, unless they qualify for an exception from the requirements, should they be selected for funding.

### **D. Central Contractor Registration (CCR)/System for Award Management (SAM) and Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Requirements**

Unless exempt from these requirements under OMB guidance at 2 CFR Part 25 (e.g., individuals), applicants must:

1. Be registered in the CCR prior to submitting an application or proposal under this announcement. CCR/SAM information can be found at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>.
2. Maintain an active CCR registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or proposal under consideration by an agency.
3. Provide its DUNS number in each application or proposal it submits to the agency. Applicants can receive a DUNS number, at no cost, by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711, or visiting the D&B website at: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>.

If an applicant fails to comply with these requirements, it will affect their ability to receive the award, if selected.

Please note that the CCR has been replaced by the System for Award Management (SAM). To learn more about SAM, go to SAM.gov or <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>.

### **E. Unliquidated Obligations**

An applicant that receives an award under this announcement is expected to manage assistance agreement funds efficiently and effectively and make sufficient progress towards completing the project activities described in the work plan in a timely manner. The assistance agreement will include terms/conditions implementing this requirement.

### **F. Reporting**

Quarterly or semiannual progress reports, as determined by the federal project officer, will be required as a condition of this award.

## **G. Useful References in Solicitation**

Any non-federal websites or website links included in this solicitation are provided for proposal preparation and/or informational purposes only. U.S. EPA does not endorse any of these entities or their services. In addition, EPA does not guarantee that any linked, external websites referenced in this solicitation comply with Section 508 (Accessibility Requirements) of the Rehabilitation Act.

## **H. Unfair Competitive Advantage**

EPA personnel will take appropriate actions in situations where it is determined that an applicant may have an unfair competitive advantage, or the appearance of such, in competing for awards under this announcement. Affected applicants will be provided an opportunity to respond before any final action is taken.

## **I. Unpaid Federal Tax Liabilities and Felony Convictions for Non-Profit and For-Profit Organizations**

Awards made under this announcement will be subject to the provisions contained in the Department of Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2012, HR 2055, Division E. Sections 433 and 434 regarding unpaid federal tax liabilities and federal felony convictions. These provisions prohibit EPA from awarding funds made available by the Act to any for-profit or non-profit organization: (1) subject to any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability; or (2) that was convicted (or had an officer or agent of such corporation acting on its behalf convicted) of a felony criminal conviction under any Federal law within 24 months preceding the award, unless EPA has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation, or such officer or agent, based on these tax liabilities or convictions, and determined that such action is not necessary to protect the Government's interests. Subject to the language in the FY 13 Appropriation Act (or Continuing Resolution), EPA anticipates that non-profit or for-profit organizations that will be covered by these prohibitions are ineligible to receive an award under this announcement.

## **J. Data Access and Information Release**

EPA has the right to obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data first produced under the awards to be made under this solicitation and authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data for Federal purposes under 40 CFR Section 30.36(c). In addition, pursuant to 40 CFR Section 30.36(d), if EPA receives a Freedom of Information Act request for research data that (1) relates to published research findings produced under an EPA award and (2) was used by the Federal Government in developing an agency action that has the force and

effect of law, then EPA shall request, and the award recipient shall provide, within a reasonable time, the research data so that it may be made available to the public through procedures established under the FOIA.

## **VII: AGENCY CONTACT**

For administrative and technical issues regarding this RFP, please contact Tim Roberts via email at [roberts.timothy-p@epa.gov](mailto:roberts.timothy-p@epa.gov). All questions must be received in writing via email or fax at 410-267-5777 with the reference line referring to this RFP (Re: **RFP EPA-R3-CBP-12-01**). All questions and answers will be posted on <http://www.epa.gov/region3/chesapeake/grants.htm>.

## **VIII: OTHER INFORMATION**

In developing your proposal, you may find the following documents helpful. Websites for guidance documents are listed here. If you prefer a paper copy, please call 1-800-YOUR BAY.

Boundaries of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

<http://www.chesapeakebay.net/maps>

Electronic copy of the *Chesapeake 2000* agreement

[http://www.chesapeakebay.net/content//publications/cbp\\_12081.pdf](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/content//publications/cbp_12081.pdf)

Electronic copy of the *CBP Guidance for Data Management*

<http://archive.chesapeakebay.net/cims/Guidance%20for%20Data%20Management%20Nov%202006.pdf>

Electronic copy of the *Chesapeake Bay Program Office Grant and Cooperative Agreement Guidance*

<http://www.epa.gov/region3/chesapeake/grants.htm>

EPA Requirements for Quality Management Plans and Quality Assurance Plans

[http://www.epa.gov/quality/qa\\_docs.html](http://www.epa.gov/quality/qa_docs.html)

Please visit the EPA Grants website (<http://www.epa.gov/ogd>) or the EPA Region 3 Grants website (<http://www.epa.gov/region3/chesapeake/grants.htm>) if you have questions about grant issues such as costs or eligibility. Further information on CBP committees is located at:

<http://www.chesapeakebay.net/about/organized>.

**Appendix A**  
**Proposal Format**  
**U. S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, Region III**  
**Chesapeake Bay Program Office Fiscal Year 2013 Request for Proposals (RFP) for**  
**the Chesapeake Bay Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Aerial Survey**  
**EPA-R3-CBP-12-01**

The following information must be provided or the proposal may not be considered complete and may not be evaluated.

**Format:** Narrative proposals as described below shall not exceed 12 single-spaced pages. The proposal must be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" paper, and font size should be no smaller than 10. Note that the 12 pages must include all supporting materials, including resumes or curriculum vitae and letters of support. With the exception of documentation of non-profit status, cost share letters of commitment, and the SF-424, if the proposal includes more than 12 pages, the additional pages will be discarded and not considered in the review. Applicants must submit one proposal for each Activity they wish to compete and should ensure it clearly identifies the Activity number. Applicant's responses should be numbered and submitted according to the format listed below.

**1. Name, address (street and email), and contact information of the applicant**

**2. Background** - Include the following in this section:

- i) Project title.
- ii) Brief description of your organization.
- iii) Documentation of non-profit status, if applicable.
- iv) Brief biographies of applicant lead(s) including resumes and/or curriculum vitae.
- v) Funding requested. Specify total cost of the project. Identify funding from other sources, including cost-share or in-kind resources.
- vi) DUNS number-See Section VI of RFP.

**3. Work plan** - Include the following in this section:

- i) A clear and concise discussion of how your organization will meet the objectives and requirements of the Program as described in Section I of the announcement;
- ii) Budget: For the first year and each of the subsequent years, provide a budget detail breakdown by the major budget categories (i.e. personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual, construction, other, and indirect). In each of the budgets, include the cost share amount (a minimum of five percent of the total project costs) and demonstrate how the cost share will be met, including, if applicable, letters of commitment from any third-party contributors. In each budget also specify how much of the funding will go to subawards

and/or contractors. Based upon the annual funding estimate of \$200,000 to \$300,000, the minimum annual cost share is calculated to be \$10,000 to \$15,000. However, it should be noted that these are broad funding ranges for all the Activities under this RFP and specific dollar amounts will be different according to the specific funding ranges associated with each Activity as noted in the RFP. Please note that subaward costs must be included in the “Other” budget costs category. For an example budget detail, please go to: [http://www.epa.gov/region03/grants/Application Kit for Grants and Cooperative Agreements.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/region03/grants/Application%20Kit%20for%20Grants%20and%20Cooperative%20Agreements.pdf), page 42. In addition, grantees applying for CBP assistance agreements must adhere to the requirement for “Administrative Costs” under the Clean Water Act, Section 117 (d)(4), which states that administrative costs shall not exceed 10 percent of the annual grant award. Information on how to calculate the 10 percent administration cost cap is located in **Appendix B: Administrative Cost Cap Worksheet.**

- iii) Environmental Results – Outputs and Outcomes: Address how the proposal will meet the expected outputs and outcomes of this project.
1. Output: An output is an environmental activity, effort, or work product related to an environmental goal or objective that will be produced within the assistance agreement period. An example of an expected output is the web-based publication of maps of SAV distribution and abundance maps and SAV bed scale distribution and abundance data, including species information where ground survey data is available. Enhancement to the procedures and methods for conducting the annual aerial survey which result in methodological changes that take advantage of the best available, cost-effective technology while maintaining the continuity and accuracy of the long-term dataset is another example of a possible output.
  2. Outcome: An outcome is a result, effect, or consequence that will result from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes are quantitative measures that may not necessarily be achievable within the assistance agreement period. An example of an outcome is evaluation of the effectiveness of management actions based on assessment of trends in SAV distribution and abundance within individual Chesapeake Bay segments. Another example of an outcome is evaluation of the effectiveness of resource management decisions to further protect SAV beds – e.g., changes to dredging restrictions and guidelines, fisheries management actions, habitat restoration actions—based on assessment of trends in SAV distribution and abundance within individual Chesapeake Bay segments.
- iv) Review Criteria: Address in narrative form each of the review criteria identified in Section V.B of the RFP. Identify by the review criteria number and title followed by your narrative.

With specific respect to the Programmatic Capability and Environmental Results Past Performance factor in V.B:

Submit a list of federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include federal grants and cooperative agreements but not federal contracts) similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements and preferably EPA agreements) and describe (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements, including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements.

In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

In addition, provide information on your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project as well as your staff's expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources, or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

**Appendix B**  
**EPA-R3-CBP-12-01**

**SAMPLE**  
**(DO NOT SUBMIT WORKSHEET WITH APPLICATION)**

**CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE COST**  
**CAP WORKSHEET**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** In accordance with Section 117(d)(4) and 117(e)(6) of the Clean Water Act (CWA), the costs of salaries and fringe benefits incurred in administering a grant under Section 117(d) or 117(e) of the CWA shall not exceed 10 percent of the annual grant award. The annual grant award is the total costs including Federal and cost share amounts. The worksheet below is provided to assist you in calculating allowable administrative costs. The Budget Detail of your Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) should reflect how your administrative costs will comply with the cap. For specific guidance refer to page 2 of this sample "Compliance with CWA Section 117 Requirements Restricting Administrative Costs."

Total Costs	\$ _____
Cap %	X .10
<b>Limit on Administrative Costs</b>	\$ _____ (a)
List Administrative Costs: (Budgeted costs for application)	
_____	\$ _____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
<b>Total</b>	\$ _____ (b)

**Line (b) cannot exceed Line (a).**

## **COMPLIANCE WITH CWA SECTION 117 RESTRICTING ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS**

### **Statutory Authority**

**Under statutory authority, grantees applying for Chesapeake Bay Program grants/cooperative agreements under Section 117 (d) or (e) must adhere to the requirement on administrative costs as follows:**

Under Section 117(a)(1) Administrative Cost - The term “administrative cost” means the cost of salaries and fringe benefits incurred in administering a grant under this section.

Under Section 117(d)(4) - Administrative Costs. - Administrative costs shall not exceed 10 percent of the annual grant award.

Under Section 117(e)(6) - Administrative Costs. -Administrative costs shall not exceed 10 percent of the annual grant award.

### Guidance for Determining Administrative Costs

**As determined by EPA/CBPO, the following provides guidance in determining administrative costs for grants/cooperative agreements under Section 117 (d) and (e) of the Clean Water Act.**

#### 1. Administrative Costs

Salaries and fringe benefits charged against the project or program element for the sole purpose of administering the grant/cooperative agreements shall not exceed 10% of the annual grant **award (Federal and cost share)**. One hundred percent of the salaries and fringe benefits related to these functions are considered administrative costs. Examples of administrative costs include, but are not limited to:

- preparation and submission of grant applications
- fiscal tracking of grants funds
- maintaining project files
- collection and submission of deliverables

#### 2. Non-administrative Costs

Salaries and fringe benefits related to the implementation of the project or program element of the grant/cooperative agreement are not considered administrative costs. None of the salaries and fringe benefit costs related to these functions shall be considered administrative costs. Example:

- the salaries and fringe benefits for technical staff to conduct work to accomplish specific Bay Program goals as outlined in the program or project elements are not administrative costs.

#### 3. Calculation of Administrative Costs

In order to ensure compliance with this requirement, use the format above or a similar format to calculate the costs and include in the Budget Detail of your Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424).

#### 4. Questions Regarding Administrative Costs

The grantees shall direct questions to the EPA Project Officer who will determine what costs should be included as administrative costs on a case-by-case basis.